

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6380

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, UR

SUBJECT: WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT THE SOVIET ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY PROPOSAL?

REF: (A) MOSCOW 9938; (B) NEW DELHI 9693

BEGIN SUMMARY: I WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE ON BREZHNEV'S ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY PROPOSAL. THE SOVIETS ARE LIKELY
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TO PRESS THE INDIANS LATER THIS YEAR FOR EXPLICIT ENDORSEMENT

OF THIS SCHEME. I EXPECT THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO TRY TO HEDGE AND FUZZ BUT SOVIET PRESSURE MAY BE GREAT. DO WE CARE? SHOULD WE TRY TO DISCOURAGE THE INDIANS AND OTHERS FROM ENDORSING THE SOVIET PROPOSAL? WHAT IS OUR VIEW ON HOW THE SOVIET PLAN AND SOVIET TACTICS IN PRESSING IT RELATE TO US INTERESTS IN ASIA? END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY MOSCOW SUGGESTS IN REFTEL A THAT THE SOVIETS ARE GEARING UP FOR MAJOR ARM TWISTING DURING THE FORTHCOMING MEETINGS WITH TANAKA AND MRS. GANDHI TO SECURE THEIR ENDORSEMENT FOR THE COLLECTIVE SECURITY SCHEME. THIS IS CERTAINLY IN LINE WITH OUR JUDGMENT OF SOVIET INTENTIONS WITH REGARD TO INDIA AS WE REPORTED IN REFTEL B. THE SOVIETS, OF COURSE, HAVE BEEN TRYING TO PUSH THE INDIANS INTO ACTIVE SPONSORSHIP OF THE SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR SOME TIME.

2. SOVIET SUPPORTED MEDIA HERE ARE NOW PROMOTING THE BREZHNEV PLAN FULL TILT. THEY FREQUENTLY PORTRAY THE INDO-SOVIET TREATY AS CONSISTENT WITH AND EVEN AS A COMPONENT OF AN ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM. A SOVIET EMBASSY PUBLICATION RECENTLY FEATURED ARTICLES BY SYMPATHETIC CONGRESS PARTY POLITICIANS SAYING THAT SUCCESS AT HELSINKI WILL ACCELERATE THE PROCESS OF PROMOTING COLLECTIVE SECURITY IN ASIA AND THAT THE INDO-SOVIET TREATY WILL FACILITATE HOLDING A CONVENTION ON THIS SUBJECT.

3. INDIAN GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN HAVE WAVERED AND WAFFLED ON THE BREZHNEV PROPOSAL SINCE IT WAS FIRST PUT FORWARD IN 1969. BUT THEY HAVE GENERALLY AVOIDED EXPLICIT ENDORSEMENTS --EVEN WHEN THESE HAVE BEEN SOLICITED BY SOVIETS. RECENTLY THEY HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY CAUTIOUS IN COMMENTING ON IT. TYPICALLY, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S ANNUAL PUBLIC REPORT THIS YEAR POINTED UP THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE MADE CLEAR THEIR VIEWS ON ASIAN SECURITY AND THAT INDIA BELIEVES IT IS FOR COUNTRIES IN THE REGION TO DISCUSS "VARIOUS PROPOSALS IN THIS REGARD" AND EVOLVE WAYS TO STRENGTHEN THEIR SOVEREIGNTY AND COOPERATION THROUGH CONSULTATIONS.

4. I EXPECT THE INDIANS WILL CONTINUE TO RESIST SOVIET PRESSURES TO ENDORSE AND PROMOTE THE BREZHNEV PROPOSAL. FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIALS SEE LITTLE OR NO GAIN FOR INDIA IN GETTING BEHIND THE
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SOVIET SCHEME. AND THEY RECOGNIZE THAT BY ASSOCIATING THEMSELVES WITH THE SOVIETS' ASIAN POLICIES THEY WOULD INCREASE THE SUSPICIONS OF CHINA AND OTHERS THAT INDIA IS A SOVIET STOOGE AND PERHAPS SET BACK THEIR EFFORTS TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH CHINA. (THIS MAY BE A SIDE BENEFIT THAT THE SOVIETS THEMSELVES RECOGNIZE.)

5. PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE IRANIAN PRECEDENT, THE INDIANS

MAY CAVE UNDER SOVIET PRESSURE, OR AS A QUID FOR SOME TANGIBLE SOVIET QUO. BUT EVEN IF THEY DO, I DON'T THINK THE SOVIETS WILL HAVE GAINED MUCH IN TERMS OF BINDING INDIA TO SOVIET POLICIES OR IN TERMS OF RECURITING INDIA AS AN ACTIVE PROPONENT OF THE SOVIET PROPOSAL. THE INDIANS, LIKE THE PERSIANS, ARE LIKELY TO START QUALIFYING AND DIFFUSING WHATEVER ENDORSEMENT THEY PUT ON PAPER BEFORE THE INK IS DRY.

6. FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF DELHI, I CAN'T JUDGE THE BROADER IMPLICATIONS OF INDIAN SUPPORT IN A COMMUNIQUE' FOR THE SOVIET PROPOSAL. BUT I SUPPOSE THE SOVIETS WOULD PLAY THIS UP AND I SUPPOSE THIS ADDITIONAL PRECEDENT COULD HELP THEM IN PRESSURING OTHER ASIAN GOVERNMENTS ONE BY ONE TO SUPPORT THE BREZHNEV PLAN.

7. DO WE CARE? SHOULD WE BE TRYING TO STIFFEN RESISTANCE AF ASIAN GOVERNMENTS AGAINST ENDORSING THE BREZHNEV PROPOSAL? SHOULD I GO IN AND TALK TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER OR TO THE SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER ABOUT THE SOVIET PROPOSAL BEFORE BREZHNEV COMES TO INDIA AND TELL THEM THAT WE HOPE THE INDIANS WON'T LEND SUPPORT TO IT? WE DON'T SEEM TO HAVE PUSHED IRAN VERY HARD ON ITS QUALIFIED SUBSCRIPTION TO THE PROPOSAL. IF THE INDIANS DID THE SAME THING, WOULD OR SHOULD WE BE MORE ALARMED?

8. HOW DO WE VIEW THE SOVIET PROPOSAL AND SOVIET TACTICS IN PRESSING IT IN RELATION TO THE NIXON DOCTRINE AND US INTERESTS IN ASIA? THE AMORPHOUS, MOTHERHOOD TERMS IN WHICH THE BREZHNEV PROPOSAL IS COUNCHED APPEAR TO PROVIDE THE SOVIETS WITH A PLATFORM FOR PROJECTING A CONCEPT OF HOW FUTURE INTER-ASIAN COOPERATION SHOULD DEVELOP AND FOR STAKING OUT A SOVIET CLAIM TO PARTICIPATION. SHOULE WE BE ADVANCING MORE AGGRESSIVELY OUR OWN CONCEPTUAL VIEW OF ASIA'S FUTURE?

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9. I'D APPRECIATE CURRENT GUIDANCE ON THIS WHOLE SUBJECT.
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